

REMARKS

This Response is responsive to the Non-Final Office Action mailed July 7, 2006 ("Office Action").

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Stevens 2002/0155329 ("Stevens '329") or, in the alternative, stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Stevens '329.

According to the Office Action, the Examiner sees no distinction between the process as described in Stevens '329 at Paragraph 0027 and as recited in the claims of the present invention. Office Action, pp. 2. As discussed below, Paragraph 0049 of the present invention illustrates the distinction between the Stevens '329 and the present invention.

As indicated by the Examiner, at Paragraph 0027 Stevens '329 mentions flowing gas through the bed under conditions in which the calcium carbonate is decomposed and the carbon dioxide is removed. Further, at Paragraph 0027 Stevens '329 mentions that the inventors have used helium, nitrogen, and steam.

In contrast, Paragraph 0049 of the present invention discusses FIG. 3b (a graph illustrating the effect of hydrating a calcinated carbon dioxide fixing material on the efficiencies of reactions occurring within the catalyst bed) as follows: "Calcination was achieved by heating the bed to about 800°C and flowing steam and nitrogen [through] the bed. After the fifteenth reforming/calcination cycle, the calcinated calcium oxide was hydrated by flowing steam through the bed at 200°C. . . . The results illustrated in FIG. 3b indicate that the functional lifetime of the carbon dioxide fixing material can be significantly increased by hydrating the calcinated carbon dioxide fixing material." This excerpt illustrates the distinction between the flowing of steam of Stevens '329 and the hydration step of the present invention.

With respect to the anticipation rejection based on Stevens '329, Stevens '329 does not expressly or inherently disclose the separate hydration step of the present invention. As a result, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-36 under §102(b) is respectfully requested.

With respect to the obviousness rejection based on Stevens '329, Stevens '329 does not suggest the separate hydration step of the present invention. As a result, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-36 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

* * * * *

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection are believed to have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa Patangia
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 52,098

December 13, 2006
Customer No. 38393
Chevron Services Company
P. O. Box 4368
Houston, Texas 77210-4368
713 754 2917 (Voice)
713 754 2944 (Fax)